
INCIDENT COMMAND SYSTEM

NATIONAL TRAINING CURRICULUM

**PRINCIPLES AND
FEATURES OF ICS**

MODULE 2

I-200



**INSTRUCTOR
GUIDE
OCTOBER 1994**

NFES 2440



CERTIFICATION STATEMENT

on behalf of the

NATIONAL WILDFIRE COORDINATING GROUP

The following training material attains the standards prescribed for courses developed under the interagency curriculum established and coordinated by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group. The instruction is certified for interagency use and is known as:

Principles and Features of ICS

Member NWCG and Training Working Team Liaison

Chair, Training Working Team

Date 11/7/94

Date 12/24/94

Description of the Performance Based System

The Wildland Fire Qualifications System is a “performance based” qualifications system. In this system, the primary criteria for qualification is individual performance as observed by an evaluator using approved standards. This system differs from previous wildland fire qualifications systems which have been “training based.” Training based systems use the completion of training courses or a passing score on an examination as a primary criteria for qualification.

A performance based system has two advantages over a training based system:

- Qualification is based upon real performance, as measured on the job, versus perceived performance, as measured by an examination or classroom activities.
- Personnel who have learned skills from sources outside wildfire suppression, such as agency specific training programs or training and work in prescribed fire, structural fire, law enforcement, search and rescue, etc., may not be required to complete specific courses in order to qualify in a wildfire position.

1. The components of the wildland fire qualifications system are as follows:

- a. Position Task Books (PTB) contain all critical tasks which are required to perform the job. PTB's have been designed in a format which will allow documentation of a trainee's ability to perform each task. Successful completion of all tasks required of the position, as determined by an evaluator, will be the basis for recommending certification.

IMPORTANT NOTE: Training requirements include completion of all required training courses prior to obtaining a PTB. Use of the suggested training courses or job aids is recommended to prepare the employee to perform in the position.

- b. Training courses and job aids provide the specific skills and knowledge required to perform tasks as prescribed in the PTB.
- c. Agency Certification is issued in the form of an incident qualification card certifying that the individual is qualified to perform in a specified position.

2. Responsibilities

The local office is responsible for selecting trainees, proper use of task books, and certification of trainees, see the Task Book Administrators Guide 330-1 for further information.

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PREFACE

This module is one of seventeen modules which comprise the Incident Command System (ICS) National Training Curriculum. The entire curriculum has been developed by an interagency steering group and a contract consultant. The curriculum was sponsored by the National Wildfire Coordinating Group, and development was directed and supported by the National Interagency Fire Center, Division of Training. The Steering Group was represented by several application areas (Search & Rescue, Law Enforcement, Structural Fire, Wildfire, etc.) which guided the work of the contractor in the development of this package.

The Steering Group was:

David P. Anderson - USDA, Forest Service
Mike Colgan - Orange County Fire Department
Dave Engle - USDI, Bureau of Land Management
Dan Francis - California Department of Forestry
Ken Mallette - New Jersey State Police
Mike Munkres - USDI, Bureau of Land Management
Gary Nelson - Los Angeles County Fire Department
Bill Vargas - State of New Mexico Department of Public Safety

The Contract Consultant was:

The Terence Haney Company
Woodland Hills, California

**IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT INSTRUCTORS OF THIS MODULE READ THE
INFORMATION CONTAINED IN THE INSTRUCTOR CURRICULUM
GUIDE AND MEET THE QUALIFICATIONS DESCRIBED THEREIN.**

Detailed Lesson Outline

COURSE:	Module 2 - Principles and Features of ICS
SUGGESTED TIME:	2 Hours
TRAINING AIDS:	Overhead projector, overhead pens, reference text
SUBJECT:	This module briefly describes the principal features which constitute the Incident Command System. Collectively, these features identify the unique quality of the ICS as an incident or event management system.
OBJECTIVES:	<p>Describe and explain the use of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Primary management functions• Management by Objectives• Unity and Chain of Command• Establishment and transfer of command• Organizational flexibility• Unified Command• Span of control• Common terminology• Personnel accountability• Integrated communications• Resources management• The Incident Action Plan

OUTLINE	AIDS & CUES
<p>REVIEW INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES</p> <p>THE INTENT OF THE MODULE IS TO PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH AN OVERVIEW OF THE MAIN FEATURES OF ICS AS A MANAGEMENT SYSTEM.</p> <p>TWELVE MAJOR FEATURES OF ICS ARE SIMPLY INTRODUCED IN THIS MODULE. ALL OF THESE WILL BE DISCUSSED IN MORE DEPTH LATER IN OTHER MODULES.</p> <p>AVOID CLASS DEBATE. ALL OF THESE CONCEPTS WILL BE DISCUSSED IN SUBSEQUENT MODULES.</p> <p>THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT MODULE OF THE NATIONAL ICS TRAINING CURRICULUM. IF THE STUDENTS COME OUT OF THIS SESSION WITH A GOOD GRASP OF ICS FEATURES, THEY WILL BE ABLE TO MAKE EFFECTIVE USE OF THE SYSTEM WHENEVER AND WHEREVER THEY APPLY IT.</p> <p>OPTIONAL: AS A BEGINNING DISCUSSION, ASK STUDENTS ABOUT THEIR UNDERSTANDING AND EXPERIENCE IN ICS.</p> <p>HAVE STUDENTS STATE WHAT THEY THINK ARE THE PRINCIPAL FEATURES OF ICS. RECORD THESE ON A WALL DISPLAY. FOLLOW UP WITH THE VIEWGRAPH AND REVIEW.</p> <p>I. The Features of ICS</p> <p>The Incident Command System is a <u>management</u> system. The information that you acquire from this training module will help to sharpen your management skills, and better equip you to be fully effective incident or event managers.</p> <p>The ICS has a number of attributes or system features.</p>	<p>02-01-I200-VG</p>

OUTLINE	AIDS & CUES
<p>Planning - The Planning Section is responsible for the collection, evaluation, and display of incident information, maintaining status of resources, and preparing the Incident Action Plan and incident-related documentation.</p> <p>Logistics - The Logistics Section is responsible for providing adequate services and support to meet all incident or event needs.</p> <p>Finance/Administration - The Finance/Administration Section is responsible for keeping track of incident-related costs, personnel and equipment records, and administering procurement contracts associated with the incident or event.</p> <p>Each of these functional areas can be expanded as needed into additional organizational units with further delegation of authority.</p> <p>ENSURE THAT ALL STUDENTS ARE CLEAR ON THE FIVE PRIMARY FUNCTIONS. DISCUSS AS NECESSARY.</p>	
<p>III. Management by Objectives</p> <p>MANAGEMENT BY OBJECTIVES OFTEN MEANS DIFFERENT THINGS TO DIFFERENT PEOPLE. EMPHASIZE THAT THIS IS BASICALLY AN APPLICATION IN THE USE OF COMMON SENSE, AND AVOID DETAILED DISCUSSION AS THERE IS A MORE EXTENDED DISCUSSION OF THIS SUBJECT IN MODULE 7.</p> <p>Within ICS, Management by Objectives covers four essential steps. These steps take place on every incident regardless of size or complexity.</p> <p>BEGIN AT THE BOTTOM OF THE VISUAL</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Understand agency policy and direction 	<p>02-04-I200-VG</p>

OUTLINE	AIDS & CUES
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Establish incident objectives 3. Select appropriate strategy 4. Perform tactical direction (applying tactics appropriate to the strategy, assigning the right resources, and monitoring performance) <p>A detailed discussion of these steps is included in Module 7.</p>	
<p>IV. Unity and Chain of Command</p> <p>In ICS, Unity of Command means that every individual has a designated supervisor.</p> <p>Chain of Command means that there is an orderly line of authority within the ranks of the organization with lower levels subordinate to, and connected to, higher levels.</p> <p>In probably ninety-five percent of the incidents, the organizational structure for operations will consist of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Command • Single Resources <p>However, as incidents expand the Chain of Command is established through an organizational structure which can consist of several layers as needed.</p>	<p>02-05-I200-VG</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Command • Sections • Branches • Divisions/Groups • Units • Resources 	<p>02-06-I200-VG</p>

OUTLINE	AIDS & CUES
<p>V. Establishment and Transfer of Command</p> <p>Command at an incident is initially established by the highest ranking authority at the scene that has jurisdiction for the incident.</p> <p>CITE AN EXAMPLE OF HOW THIS WORKS ON A MINOR INCIDENT WITH ONE OR TWO RESOURCES.</p> <p>Transfer of Command at an incident may take place for the following reasons:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A more qualified person assumes command. 2. The incident situation changes over time to where a jurisdictional or agency change in command is legally required, or it makes good management sense to make a transfer of command. 3. Normal turnover of personnel on long or extended incidents. 	<p>02-07-I200-VG</p>
<p>VI. Organizational Flexibility</p> <p>The ICS organization adheres to a "form follows function" philosophy. In other words, the organization at any given time should reflect only what is required to meet planned tactical objectives.</p> <p>USE VIEWGRAPH TO SHOW THAT ONLY FUNCTIONS/POSITIONS NECESSARY FOR A PARTICULAR INCIDENT WILL BE FILLED.</p> <p>The size of the current organization and that of the next operational period is determined through the incident action planning process.</p> <p>A number of organizational elements may be activated in the various sections without activating sectional chiefs.</p>	<p>02-08-I200-VG</p>

OUTLINE	AIDS & CUES
<p>THIS IS A VERY IMPORTANT CONCEPT IN ICS. IT WILL BE ADDRESSED MANY TIMES IN FURTHER MODULES. MAKE SURE IT IS UNDERSTOOD THAT THE ORGANIZATION CHART IS SIMPLY A FRAMEWORK TO HANG YOUR HAT. WHERE YOU HANG IT DEPENDS ON THE FUNCTION TO BE PERFORMED.</p> <p>Each activated element must have a person in charge of it. <u>In some cases a single supervisor may initially be in charge of more than one unit.</u></p> <p>Elements which have been activated and are clearly no longer needed should be deactivated to decrease organizational size.</p>	<p>02-09-I200-VG</p>
<p>VII. Unified Command</p> <p>Unified Command is an ICS management process which allows all agencies who have jurisdictional or functional responsibility for the incident to jointly develop a common set of incident objectives and strategies.</p> <p>This is accomplished without losing or giving up agency authority, responsibility, or accountability.</p> <p>Unified Command is an important feature of ICS. It allows agencies having a legitimate responsibility at an incident to be part of the Incident Command function.</p>	<p>02-10-I200-VG</p>
<p>Under Unified Command, the following always applies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The incident will function under a single, coordinated Incident Action Plan. • One Operations Section Chief will have responsibility for implementing the Incident Action Plan. 	<p>02-11-I200-VG</p>

OUTLINE	AIDS & CUES
<p>on multi-agency incidents without confusion caused by various multi-agency rank designations. It also provides a standardized method for ordering personnel to fill positions.</p> <p><u>Resources</u> - Common designations are assigned to various kinds of resources.</p> <p>FOR EXAMPLE, DEPENDING UPON THE AGENCY, TANKERS COME WITH WHEELS, WITH WINGS, OR SAIL ON WATERWAYS. USE OTHER EXAMPLES AS APPROPRIATE.</p> <p>Many kinds of resources may also be classified by type, which will indicate their capabilities (e.g., types of helicopters, patrol units, engines, etc.).</p> <p>For example, in ICS a vehicle that is used in fire suppression is called an engine. Recognizing that there is a variety of engines, a type classification is given based on tank capacity, pumping capability, staffing and other factors.</p> <p>FACILITIES WERE BRIEFLY DESCRIBED IN MODULE 1. REVIEW IF NECESSARY.</p> <p>X. Personnel Accountability</p> <p>Several procedures within ICS ensure personnel accountability.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Check-In - Mandatory for all personnel upon arrival at an incident. • Unity of Command - Ensures everybody has only one supervisor. • Resource Status Unit - Maintains status of all assigned resources. 	<p>02-15-I200-VG Page 1 of 2</p>

OUTLINE	AIDS & CUES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Division/Group Assignment Lists - Identifies resources with active assignments in the Operations Section. • Unit Logs - A record of personnel assigned and major events in all ICS organizational elements. 	<p>02-15-I200-VG Page 2 of 2</p>
<p>XI. Integrated Communications</p> <p>The ability to communicate within ICS is absolutely essential.</p> <p>Communications can be looked at in at least three different ways.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A. The "hardware" systems that transfer information. B. Planning for the use of all available communications frequencies and resources. C. The procedures and processes for transferring information. <p>Just as every incident requires an Incident Action Plan, every incident also needs a Communications Plan. Like the action plan, it can be very simple and stated orally, or it can be quite complex, and form a part of a written Incident Action Plan.</p> <p>Several communication networks may be established depending upon the size and complexity of the incident. These may include:</p>	<p>02-16-I200-VG</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Command Net - Established to link supervisory personnel from Incident Commander down to and including division and group supervisors. • Tactical Nets - Established in a variety of ways, e.g., by agency, department, geographical 	<p>02-17-I200-VG</p>

OUTLINE	AIDS & CUES
<p>area, or function. Tactical nets may be established for each branch, or for divisions and groups, depending upon hardware and frequency availability, and specific incident needs.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support Nets - Established on larger incidents to handle logistics traffic and resource status changes. • Ground-to-Air - Established to coordinate ground-to-air traffic. • Air-to-Air - Assigned for coordination between aircraft assigned to an incident. <p>An awareness of available communications systems and frequencies, combined with an understanding of incident requirements, will enable the Communications Unit Leader to develop an effective Communications Plan for each operational period.</p> <p>An essential part of an effective multi-agency incident management system is for all communications to be in clear text. That is, do not use radio codes.</p>	
<p>XII. Resources Management</p> <p>Resources assigned to an incident are managed in one of the following ways:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Single Resources - Single Resources include both personnel and their required equipment. • Task Forces - A Task Force is any combination of single resources within span of control guidelines. They are assembled for a particular tactical need, with common communications, and a leader. Task Forces can be pre-determined or assembled at an incident from available single resources. 	<p>02-18-I200-VG</p>

OUTLINE	AIDS & CUES
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strike Teams - <p>THE TERM "STRIKE TEAM" WAS COINED BY THE FIRE SERVICES TO DESCRIBE THREE DIFFERENT KINDS OF STRIKE TEAMS. OTHER DISCIPLINES MAY USE OTHER KINDS OF FUNCTIONAL TEAMS.</p> <p>A Strike Team is a combination of a designated number of the <u>same kind and type</u> of resources with common communications and a leader. The number of resources to be used in the team will be based on what is needed to perform the function. Span of control guidelines should apply. Strike Teams can be pre-determined or assembled at an incident from available single resources.</p> <p>The use of Task Forces and Strike Teams:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maximizes effective use of resources. • Reduces span of control. • Reduces communications traffic. <p>Tactical resources assigned to an incident will always be in one of three status conditions.</p> <p>Assigned - Resources performing an active assignment.</p> <p>Available - Resources ready for deployment.</p> <p>Out of Service - Resources not assigned or not available.</p>	<p>02-19-I200-VG</p> <p>02-20-I200-VG</p>

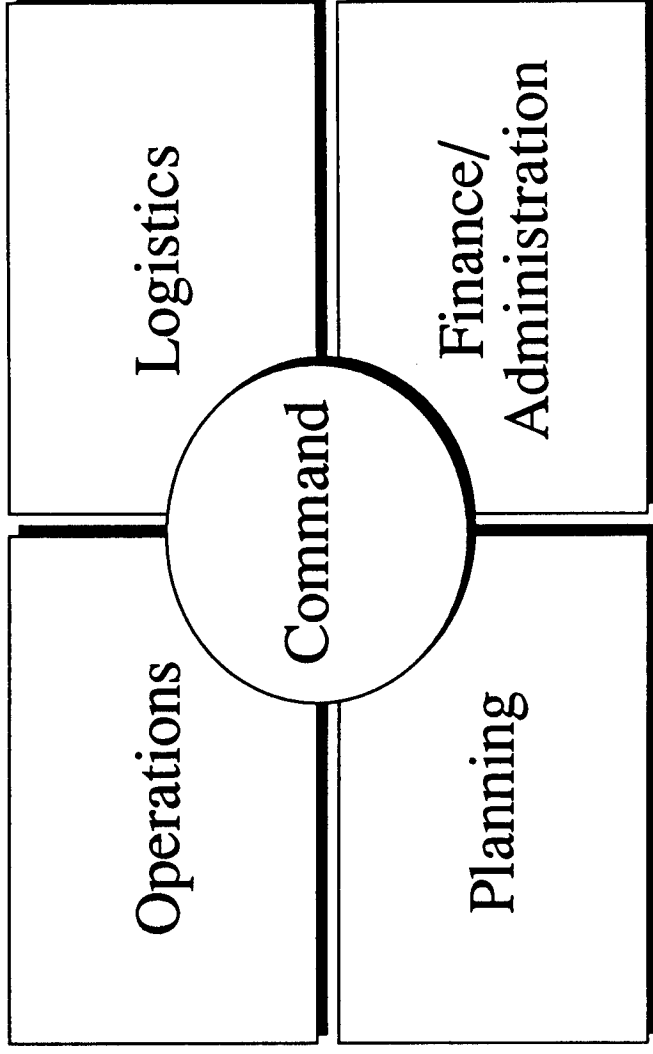
OUTLINE	AIDS & CUES
<p data-bbox="233 272 719 314">XIII. The Incident Action Plan</p> <p data-bbox="331 357 878 400">Every incident needs an action plan.</p> <ul data-bbox="331 442 1170 640" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="331 442 1170 555">• The purpose of the plan is to provide all incident supervisory personnel with appropriate direction for future actions. <li data-bbox="331 597 922 640">• The plan may be oral or written. <p data-bbox="331 676 1170 874">Written plans should be used when it is essential that all levels of a growing organization have a clear understanding of the tactical actions associated with the next operational period. It is important to use written action plans whenever:</p> <ul data-bbox="331 917 1138 1236" style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="331 917 1032 959">• Two or more jurisdictions are involved. <li data-bbox="331 1002 1138 1115">• The incident will overlap major changes in personnel changes or go into a new operational period. <li data-bbox="331 1157 1110 1236">• There is a partial or full activation of the ICS organization. <p data-bbox="418 1278 1159 1476">In ICS, an Incident Briefing Form is used on smaller incidents to record initial actions and list assigned and available resources. As incidents grow in complexity and/or size ICS provides a format for a written action plan.</p> <p data-bbox="233 1513 1127 1598">KNOWLEDGE OF THESE FEATURES WILL PROVIDE STUDENTS WITH A FOUNDATION FOR USING ICS.</p> <p data-bbox="233 1634 1110 1747">THIS COMPLETES PRESENTATION MATERIAL FOR THIS MODULE. HAVE STUDENTS PREPARE FOR MODULE TEST WHICH FOLLOWS.</p>	<p data-bbox="1208 846 1451 889">02-21-I200-VG</p>

Module 2 Objectives:

Students will be asked to describe and identify, as appropriate, the major elements associated with the following features of ICS:

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Primary functions | <input type="checkbox"/> Unified Command |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Management by Objectives | <input type="checkbox"/> Span of control |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Unity and Chain of Command | <input type="checkbox"/> Common terminology |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Establish command | <input type="checkbox"/> Personnel accountability |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Transfer of command | <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated communications |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational flexibility | <input type="checkbox"/> Resources management |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> The Incident Action Plan |

Five Primary ICS Management Functions



Functional Responsibilities

Function

Command

Responsibility

= Overall responsibility

Operations

= Direct tactical actions

Planning

= Prepare action plan - maintain
resource & situation status

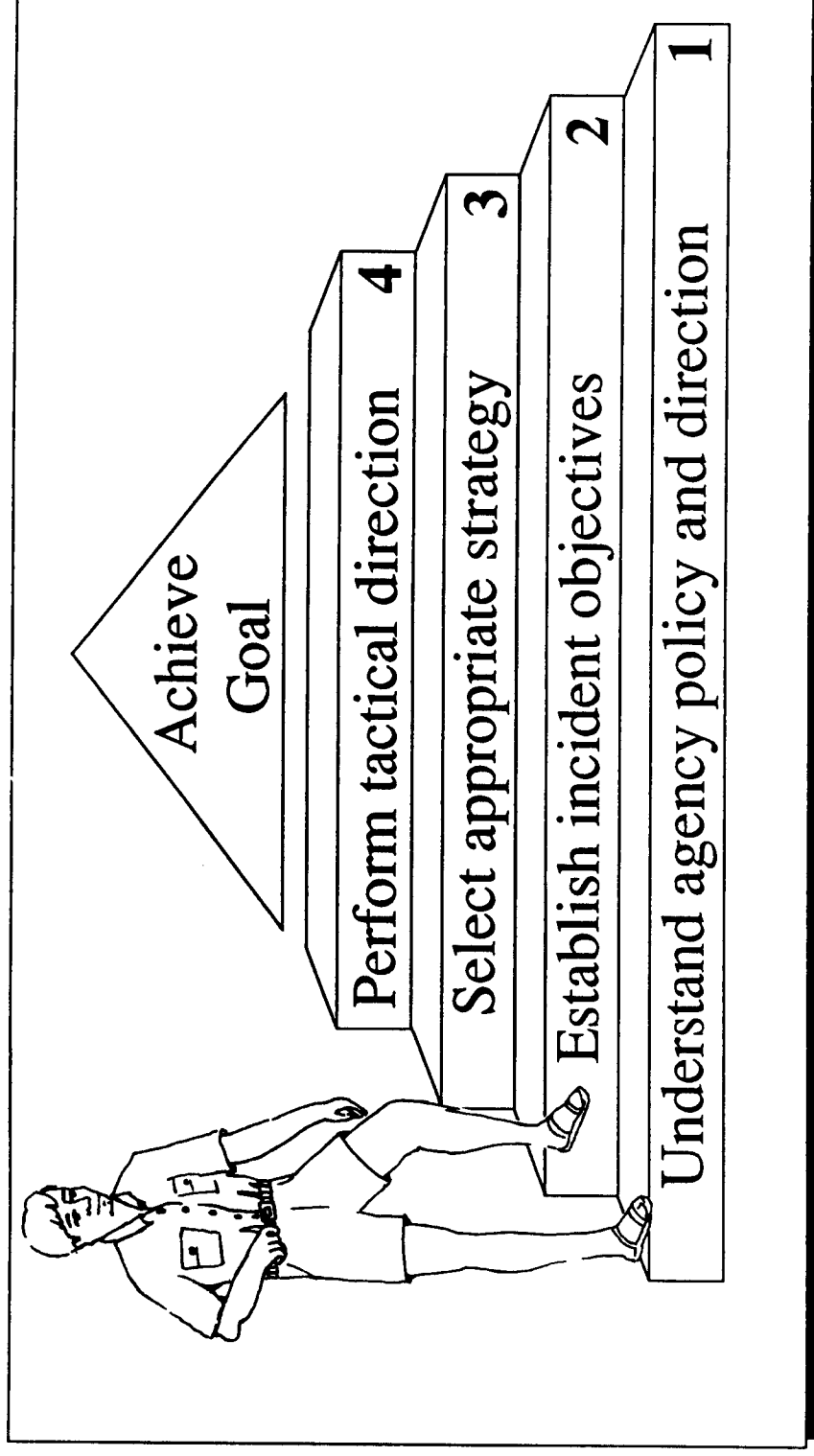
Logistics

= Provide support

Finance/Administration

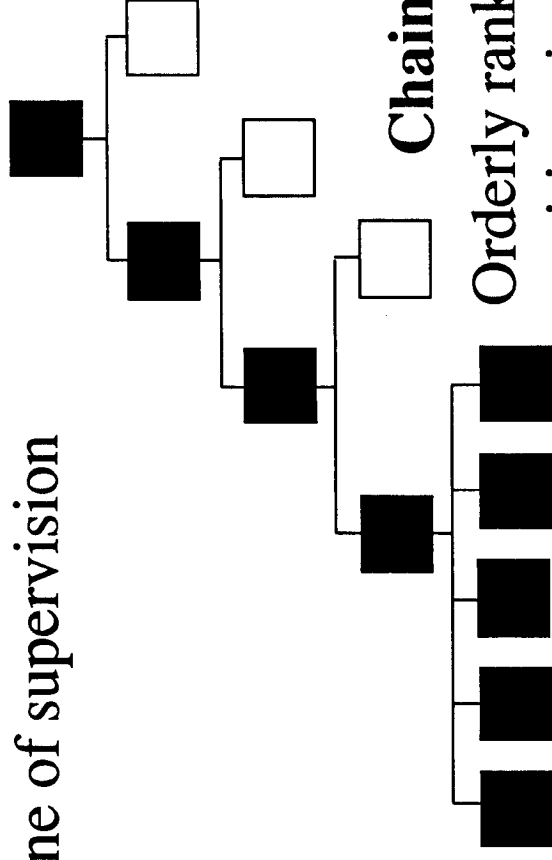
= Cost accounting & procurements

Incident Management by Objectives



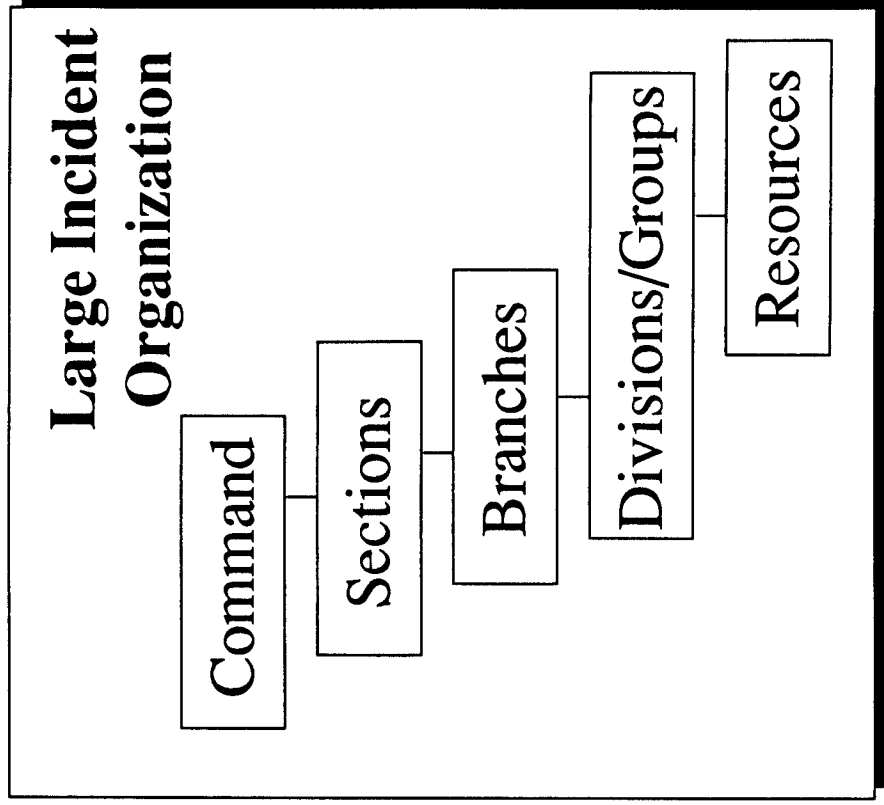
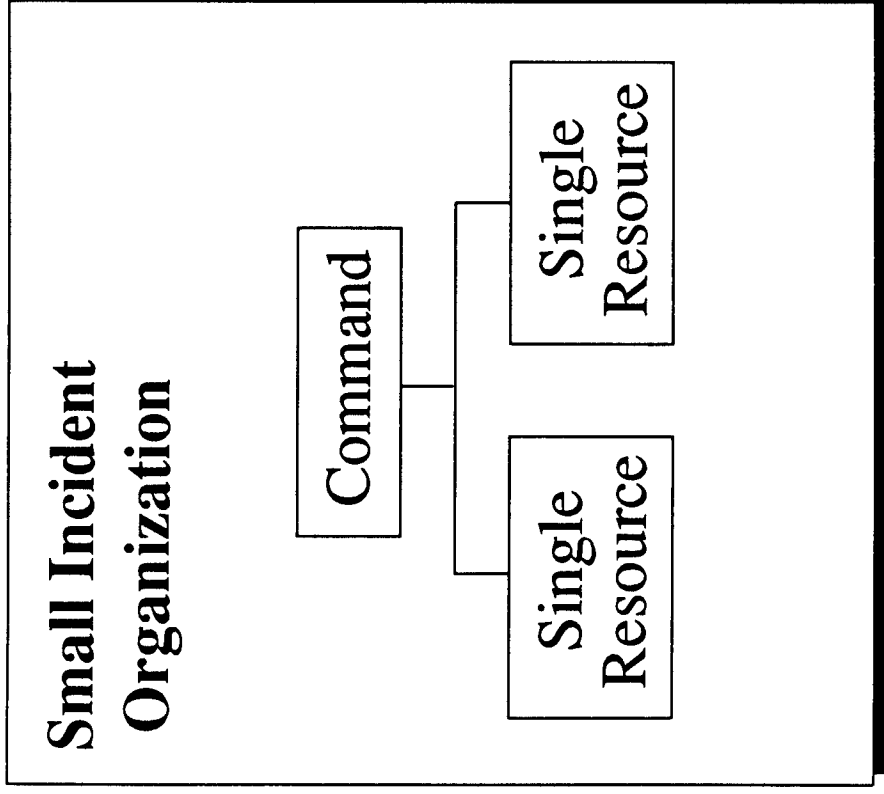
Unity and Chain of Command

Unity of Command - Have a clear line of supervision



Chain of Command -
Orderly ranking of management positions in line of authority

Incident Operations Organization

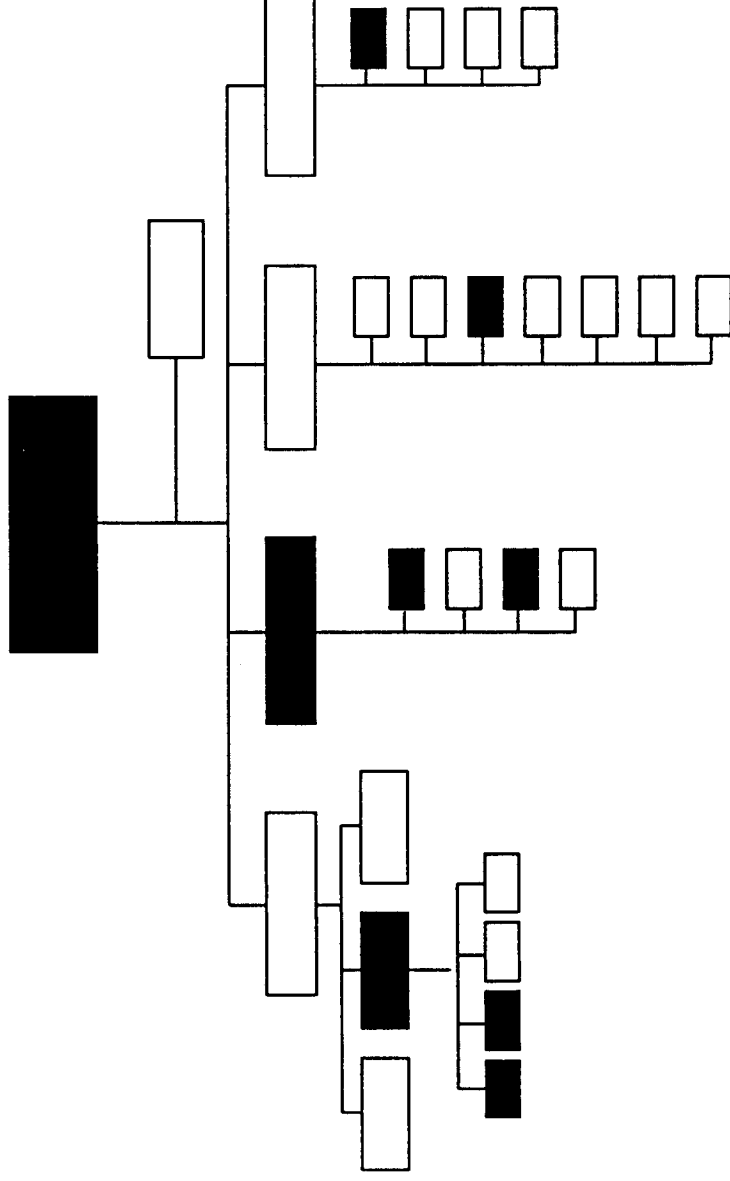


**Multiple layers as needed
for span of control**

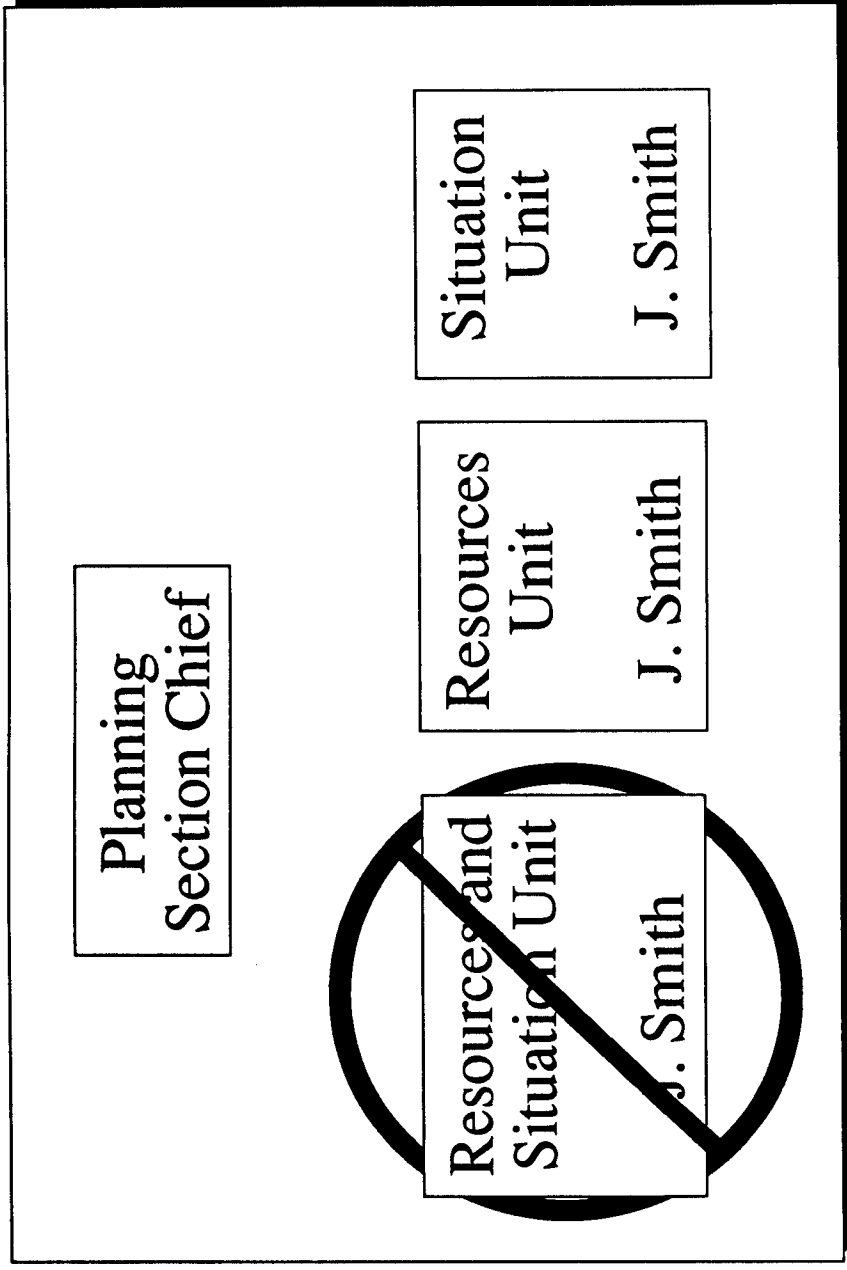
Reasons to Transfer Command

- ☐ A more qualified person assumes command.
- ☐ A jurisdictional or agency change in command is legally required or makes good management sense.
- ☐ Normal turnover of personnel on long or extended incidents.

ICS Organization Flexibility

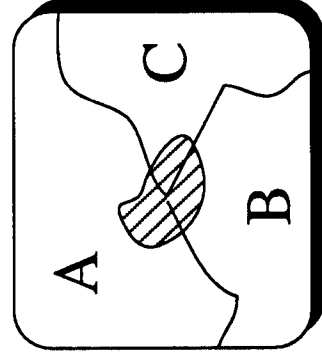


Functions will determine the required organization.

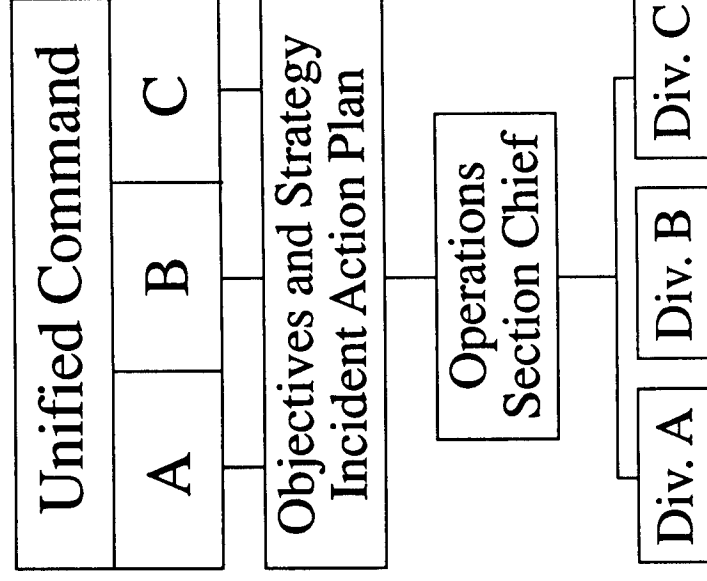


General Guideline: Do not combine organizational units.
One person may supervise more than one unit.

Managing an Incident Using Unified Command



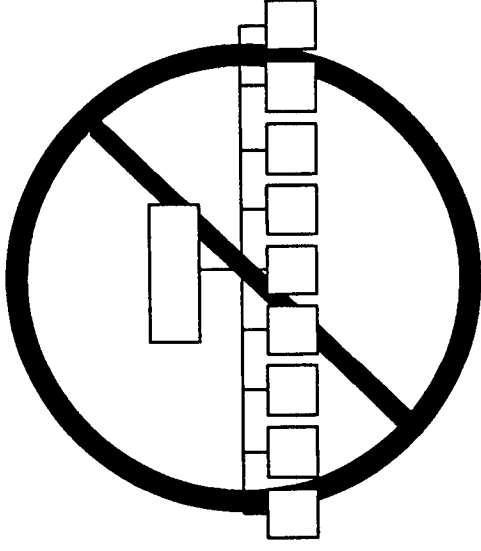
Hazardous
Materials
Incident



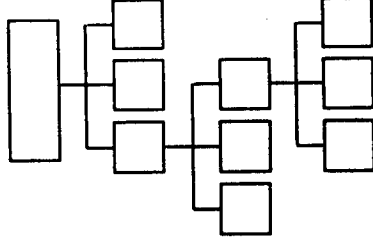
Under Unified Command there will always be:

- ☐ A single, coordinated Incident Action Plan.
- ☐ One Operations Section Chief.
- ☐ One Incident Command Post.

Span of Control

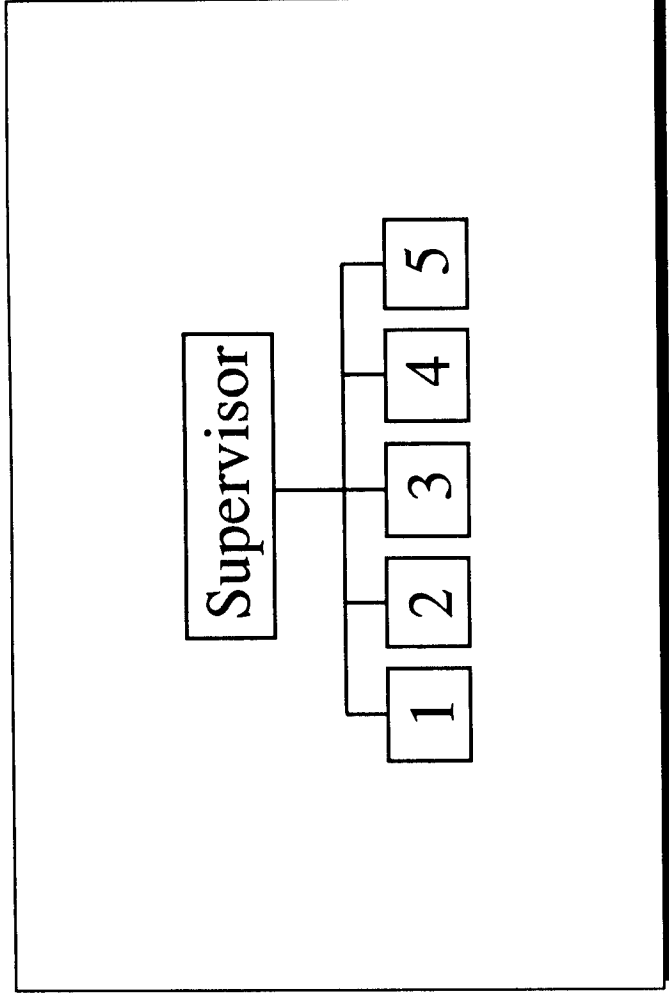


Ineffective and
possibly dangerous



Effective span
of control

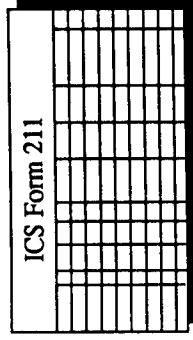
Optimum Span of Control is One to Five



In ICS, common terminology is applied to:

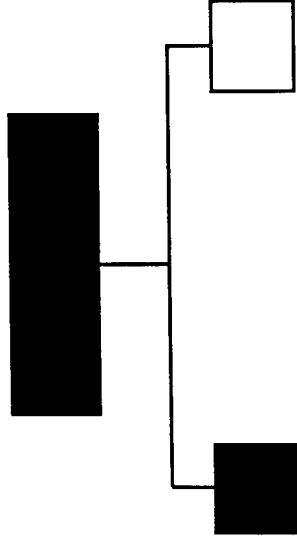
- ☐ Organizational elements.
- ☐ Position titles.
- ☐ Resources.
- ☐ Facilities.

Personnel accountability is maintained through the use of:

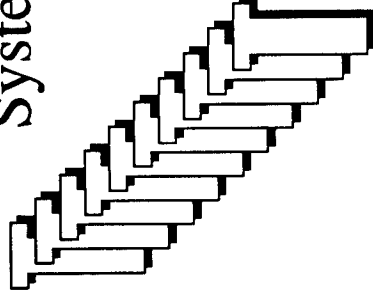


Check-in Lists
ICS Form 211

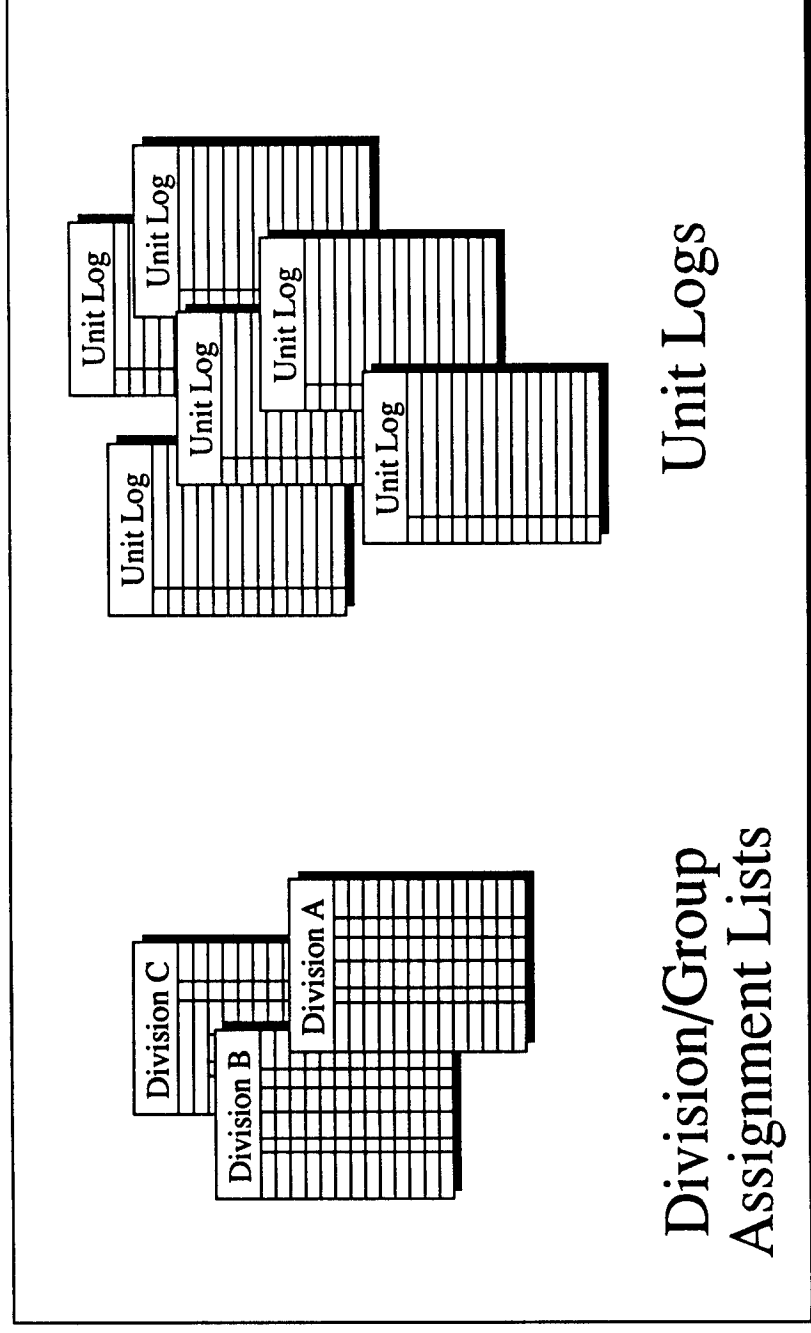
Unity of Command



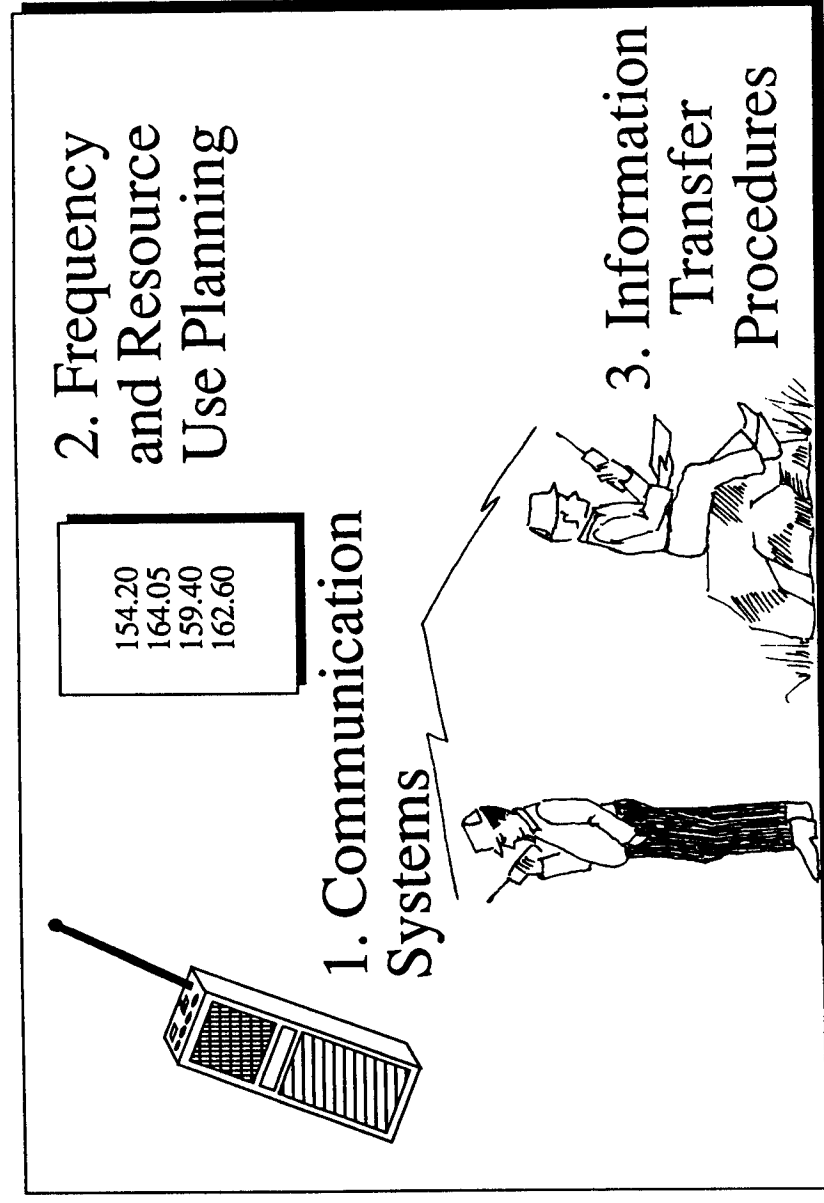
Resource Status Keeping
Systems



Personnel accountability is maintained through the use of:



ICS Integrated Communications

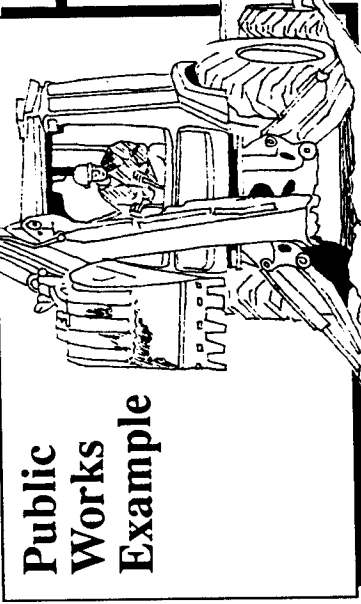
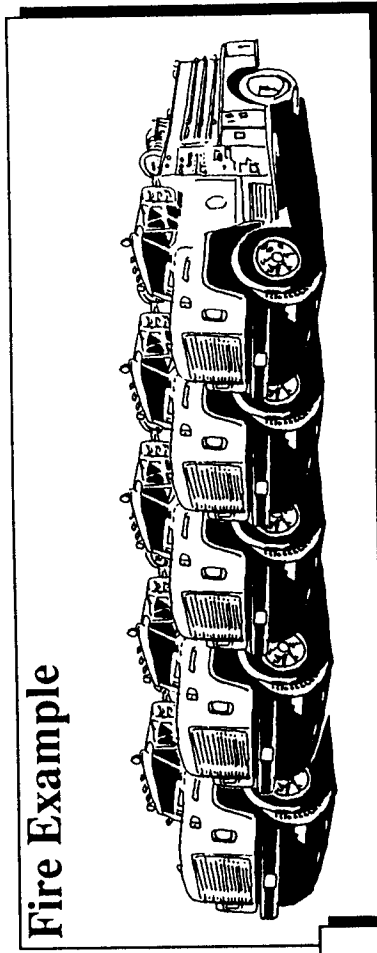
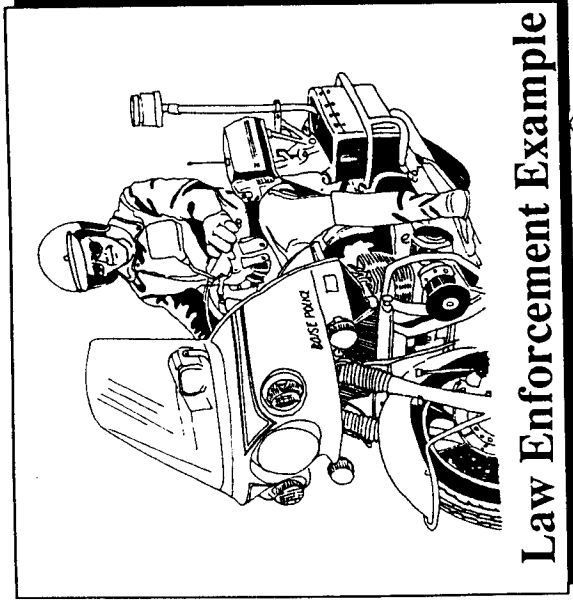


Communications Networks That May be Required

- ☐ Command net
- ☐ Tactical nets
- ☐ Support net
- ☐ Ground-to-air
- ☐ Air-to-air

Resource Management in ICS

Single Resources
Includes personnel and equipment



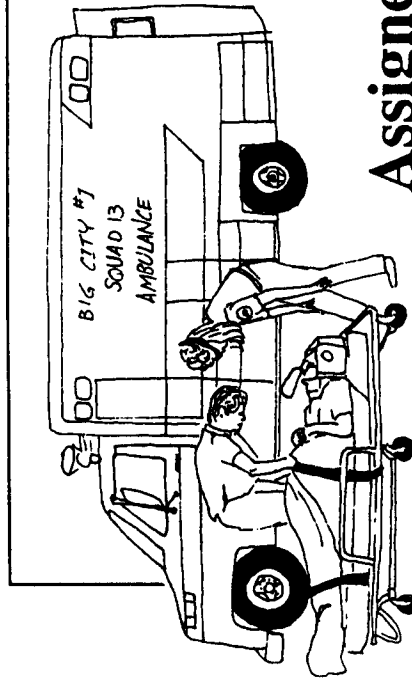
Strike Team
Combination of same kind and type

Task Forces
Combination of single resources

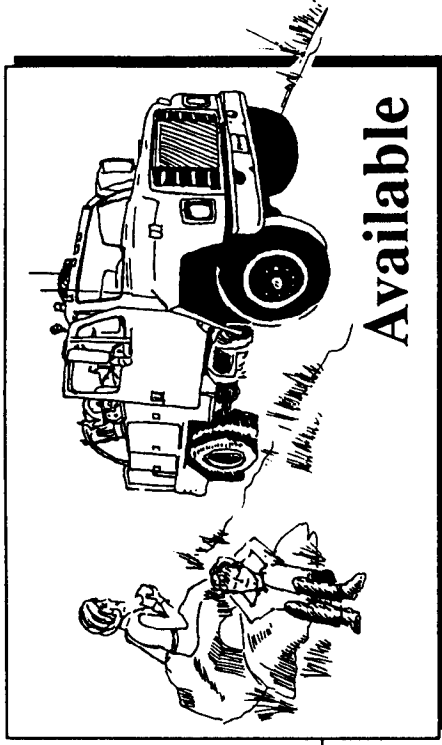
The Use of Task Forces and Strike Teams:

- ☐ Maximizes effective use of resources.
- ☐ Reduces span of control.
- ☐ Reduces communications traffic.

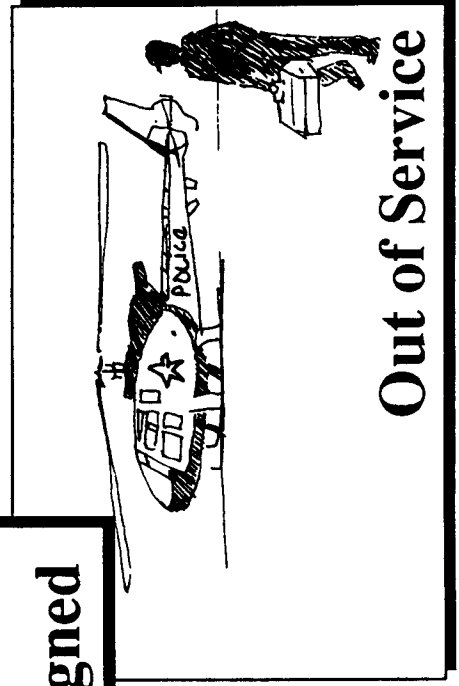
Resource Status Conditions in ICS



Assigned



Available



Out of Service

The Written Action Plan is Needed When:

- ☐ Two or more jurisdictions are involved.
- ☐ The incident will overlap an operational period change.
- ☐ Partial or full activation of the ICS organization.